

88-day race to 88 cities

Gardena Mayor Tanaka is taking his bid for sheriff to every municipality in county

By Brian Charles

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In an age where political campaigns are increasingly turning to social media and the Internet to rally support and cash contributions, Paul Tanaka's bid for Los Angeles County sheriff has an almost nostalgic feel.

The Gardena mayor and former Los Angeles County undersheriff aims to campaign in 88 cities in 88 days in hopes that he can shake enough hands, attend enough community events and embrace enough civic leaders to defeat Sheriff Lee Baca, an incumbent with name recognition and a mountain of cash.

"The idea for the 88 cities tour came out of numerous conversations we have had with Paul," said Kelsey Eiben, Tanaka's campaign manager. "He would often say that various residents from Los Angeles County's 88 cities want different things from their public safety officials.

"In addition, some residents do not realize how the Los Angeles County Sheriff's De-

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partment affects their city even if they have their own police department.

Tanaka, retired sheriff's Cmdr. Bob Olmsted and retired sheriff's Lt. Patrick Gomez have announced their candidacies for next year's election in June. Gomez could not be reached for comment.

Since launching the tour Sept. 17, Tanaka has been to 14 cities. His tour doesn't hit a city a day for 88 straight days, but it often includes several stops in a single day, followed by a few days off.

"It certainly helps that I am retired from full-time work," Tanaka said about squeezing in so many events in such a short window of time.

On Sept. 26, Tanaka's tour included three campaign stops. He met community leaders in San Marino, politicians in Temple City and cut through thick plumes of smoke at a cigar fundraiser in Monterey Park held by the Los Angeles chapter of the Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association.

Tanaka's campaign has all the digital bells and whistles one expects in a 21st-century campaign. His website is updated constantly and his aides are glued to their smartphones. But the move to shoe-leather campaigning this early in the race plays to the Gardena mayor's strengths. Tanaka is quite comfortable putting his smile on full display and shaking as many hands as possible.

"I think it is important for us. It's an opportunity to get out, meet people and let them know we are running and why we are running," Tanaka said. "I believe in face-to-face meetings. I believe in handshakes."



STEVE MCCRANK — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Gardena Mayor Paul Tanaka is taking his campaign for sheriff on the road, aiming to make stops in all 88 cities in the county in 88 days. Since launching the tour, the former undersheriff has traveled to 14 cities, including Monterey Park where he attended a Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association event Thursday.

Face time is as important to the Tanaka camp as endorsements at this point in the race. For example, the local chapter of the Hispanic American Police Command Officers Association doesn't endorse candidates, but during Tanaka's visit, retired Sheriff's Department Lt. Gil Carrillo, who helped capture the infamous "Night Stalker" Richard Ramirez, stumped for the former undersheriff in front of the more than 100 Latino law enforcement agents.

"I was very supportive of Mr. Baca before, because he represented change, but right now it's time for another change," Carrillo said.

Like Tanaka, Olmsted is making the rounds across Los Angeles County. His tour doesn't have a catchy name, but it's focused on building a large enough apparatus to take down Baca.

"Right now (Olmsted) is mostly focused on fundraising," Olmsted campaign manager John Thomas said Friday. "We need to have a war chest to introduce (Olmsted) to the voters to remind them why we need a new sheriff."

Campaign finance reports won't be available until January, but Thomas, who has

been somewhat tight-lipped about his candidate's finances, said his candidate has raised cash in the six-figure range. In Baca's last competitive race, the 2006 primary, the sheriff raised more than \$500,000.

Tanaka's whirlwind tour and glad-handing doesn't seem to phase the Olmsted camp.

"Bob doesn't need to go on a listening tour to fix the problems of the department. He knows where the bodies are buried," Thomas said.

Baca won't venture out on the campaign trail anytime soon, and don't expect him to launch a website for at least a month, says his campaign manager, Parke Skelton.

"He is awfully busy being sheriff and the election is far away," Skelton said.

With the primary election still eight months away, he said, voters won't pay much attention to the sheriff's race until next spring.

"For most voters, the campaign won't be engaging until the last eight weeks," Skelton said.

The sheriff's campaign will ramp up shortly after the new year, Skelton said.

While much attention has been paid to social media and digital campaign strategies after President Barack Obama used those tools so effectively in his 2008 and 2012 campaigns, elections are still won by establishing name identification, getting the candidate's message out and securing endorsements from local political heavyweights.

"Social media is about keeping your voters informed and getting your message out to your loyalists," said Douglas Johnson, a fellow with the Rose Institute of State and Local Government at Claremont McKenna College.

"In something like a small town, social media can be very important, but in a place like L.A. County it's only somewhat effective."

Political consultants use social media to mine voter data and deliver messages to the base. But social media's reach is limited in a place the size of Los Angeles County, which is as large as some states in both geography and population.

Tanaka's tour across the

sprawling county also illustrates one of the Sheriff's Department most persistent problems — handling the disparate issues facing communities that the agency oversees.

"You know what the most important thing in Malibu is? The Pacific Coast Highway and the tragic deaths on that road," Tanaka said.

During his visit in Malibu, Tanaka was peppered with questions about how the agency could better patrol the highway that winds along the coast, and is routinely the scene of horrific traffic accidents.

Tanaka proposed a community solution.

"You can't tell me we can't bring together a focus group made up of residents, community leaders and business people and figure this thing out," Tanaka said.

Hitting the campaign trail this hard this early is less about trying to persuade voters and more about trying to fill a war chest, according to veteran political strategist Allan Hoffenblum.

"We divide people into two groups. The first we call the 14 percenters. These are the people who intensely follow politics. Then we have the 86 percenters. They don't concentrate on politics this early," said Hoffenblum, who runs the Los Angeles-based Allan Hoffenblum & Associates political consulting firm.

"What Tanaka is doing is focusing on the 14 percenters, because that's where you go for money and for endorsements. He is focusing on people who go to Rotary, Soroptimists and chamber of commerce meetings. Hopefully, that will lead to money and endorsements."

Campaign finance reports in the sheriff's race won't be out until January, but the last time Baca ran a competitive race he raised more than \$500,000, according to county records.

Taking down Baca means overcoming his money and name recognition, Hoffenblum said.

"Baca has built-in name identification; the voters know who he is," Hoffenblum said. "Every candidate who wants to run wants the name of the sheriff on his campaign mailer."

When *LA Times* the perp was once a victim

Mon 10-7-13

Tatiana Thibes had a horrific childhood. Should that become a factor in her sentence for burglary?

BY JACK LEONARD

The rapes started when Tatiana Thibes was a child. Her father's sexual assaults became more frequent as she grew older and were accompanied by beatings and torture, she recounted in court years later. He used surveillance cameras, she said, to keep her a prisoner at home. When he was arrested for stabbing her in the chest, an investigation revealed through DNA testing that he had fathered her three children.

After her father was sentenced to life in prison, Thibes spoke of overcoming her 19-year ordeal by becoming a therapist to help other victims of sex abuse.

But four years later, the 33-year-old recently appeared in the same downtown Los Angeles courthouse where she once testified against her father, this time as a defendant.

Thibes has been in court for multiple hearings while judges and prosecutors decide what punishment she deserves. She could be sentenced to prison after her conviction last year for helping three gang members burglarize homes in Tujunga. (The Times generally withholds the name of sex crime victims, but Thibes wanted her name used.)

"I know I messed up. I feel like I let a lot of people down. I'm ashamed," Thibes said in a recent

[Abuse, from A1]
phone interview from jail.

Cases like Thibes' are a thorny challenge for the criminal justice system, one that judges and prosecutors routinely wrestle with: How should the courts punish serious offenders who have themselves endured difficult or abusive upbringings? The prosecutor who tried her burglary case said he feels torn as his office considers an appropriate sentence.

Rick Carr, a veteran Torrance police sex crimes investigator, was used to hearing harrowing accounts of abuse, but even he was shocked by the report he took in 2005.

Thibes was living in a Torrance apartment when she spoke to Carr about the sexual abuse. By then her father, Lindolfo, had already been arrested for stabbing her in Las Vegas.

She told Carr that her father began assaulting her when the family was living in Los Angeles and her mother was working as an overnight baby sitter. He plied her with alcohol and drugs, starting with marijuana and later cocaine. He threatened to kill or blind her if she reported him.

He pulled her out of school when she was in sixth grade and rigged the family's West Adams home with surveillance cameras to monitor her movements and prevent her escape. He tortured her by beating the soles of her feet with a wooden stick and covered her head with a plastic bag until she passed out.

At 17, she gave birth to a child by him. By 24, she had had two more of his children.

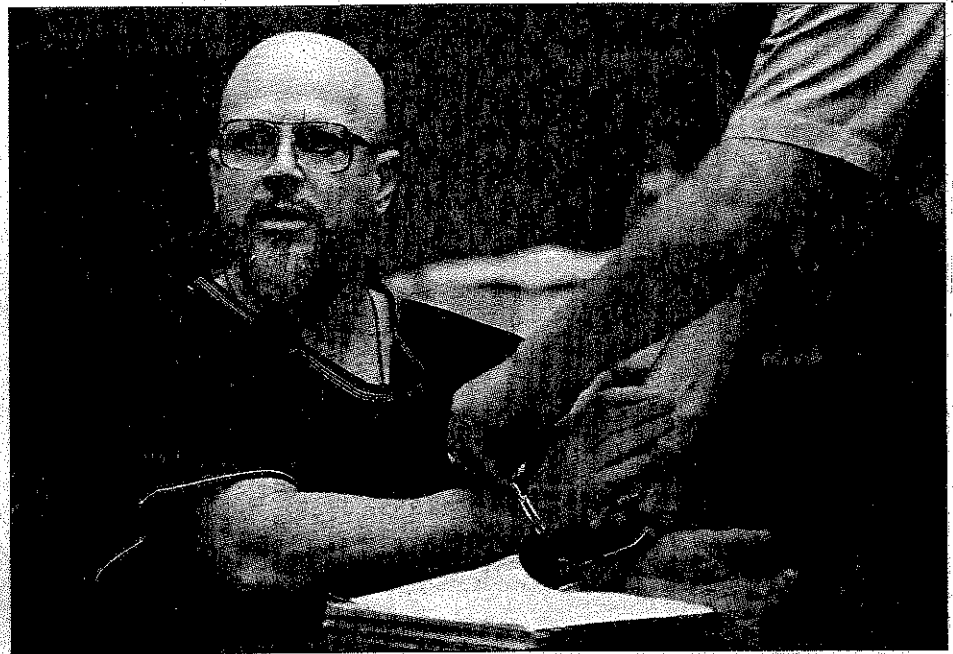
"What this woman had to endure was unspeakable," said Carr, now retired from the Police Department.

Los Angeles County prosecutors filed sexual abuse charges.

At a trial in 2009, Carr recalled, Thibes' father acted as his own attorney and leered at his daughter during her testimony. He accused her of lying, but jurors convicted him of more than a dozen counts of rape and other types of sexual assault. He was sentenced to 109 years to life in prison. He had also been sentenced to prison in Nevada in the stabbing case.

During the L.A. case, Carr said, it seemed as if Thibes was handling her life well. She and her children had moved into a house in Victorville with a boyfriend, and the couple had a son together. Her children enjoyed showing off their homework and school reports to visitors.

In an interview with *The Times*, Thibes recalled taking her oldest daughter to school on her first day of sixth grade. She was determined, she said, to give her kids the type of normal childhood she never had. But the experience of raising her children also reinforced the horrors of her own upbringing. She began pulling away from her children, she said.



AL SEIB Los Angeles Times

LINDOLFO THIBES at his sentencing in 2009 for continuously sexually assaulting his daughter Tatiana for nearly two decades. He also beat and tortured her.

"I was acting like a wild teenager rather than the adult that I am," Thibes said.

She started therapy after her father's arrest, but talking about her abuse made her feel worse, she said. So she quit.

"Not talking about it was the only way to protect my sanity," she said. "I didn't want to face my worst fears, and that was getting counseling and confronting my abuse."

Although some sexual abuse victims are more resilient, others suffer long-term psychological damage, mental health experts say. Some victims experience extreme anxiety, a sense of guilt and other problems. Some, as in Thibes' case, turn to drugs or alcohol, increasing their likelihood of ending up behind bars.

Eighteen months after her father's arrest, Thibes crashed while driving drunk on the 105 Freeway. Two of her passengers were briefly hospitalized. She was placed on probation.

She broke up with her boyfriend and after her father's trial started dating Adam Ortiz, a gang member with a long criminal record. Months later, Ortiz was sent to prison for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

On June 1, 2010, three months after Ortiz's release from prison, Thibes went knocking on doors in a Tujunga neighborhood. "I'm here for an appointment with Sue. Is Sue here?" she asked one resident who came to the door, according to court records.

After finding homes where no one answered, Thibes returned to her minivan parked nearby. Ortiz, 25, and two other gang members got out and ransacked a house.

Police officers, tipped by a neighbor's call, responded and saw Thibes speed off with the

men in the minivan. She ran stop signs and crashed while trying to escape.

A jury last year convicted her and the three men of residential burglary and attempted residential burglary and concluded that the crimes were to benefit a street gang. The men were sentenced to prison terms of at least 12 years.

Thibes has expressed remorse. She said she has never been a gang member and described Ortiz — the father of her youngest child — as violent and controlling. She feared saying no to him.

"All I pretty much know is chaos," she said.

After Thibes was jailed, a dependency court removed her children from her care. Thibes' attorney, Ron Seabold, said sending her to serve her sentence at a rehabilitation center where mothers can live with their children could help convince a dependency court judge that Thibes should be reunited with her five children, who range in age from 2 to 16.

Deputy Dist. Atty. Richard Gallegly, who prosecuted Thibes, said that by scoping out targets for burglary, Thibes acted as "the face of this crime." She was 30 and took an active role in a sophisticated plan to victimize others, he said.

But the horrifying nature of Thibes' history stands out, Gallegly said. He compared her to victims of recent high-profile sexual abuse cases, including Jaycee Dugard, who at 11 was kidnapped in South Lake Tahoe and repeatedly raped during 18 years in captivity.

"She wasn't far off that," Gallegly said. "We want to give her a chance, but she's in her early 30s.... When will she stand up and take responsibility?"

Gallegly said his office is willing to consider allowing Thibes to serve out her sentence in a rehabilitation facility if she is legally eligible.

Among the hurdles, however, is a state law that says someone who commits a serious crime, such as burglary, while on probation for another felony must be sentenced to prison. Thibes had one more week on felony probation for her 2006 drunk driving offense when she was arrested for the burglaries, court records say.

Immigration authorities had flagged her case for possible deportation, preventing her release from jail. Thibes' parents had brought her to the United States illegally from Brazil when she was 6. In July, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services sent Thibes a letter denying her request for permanent residency, citing her burglary conviction.

Public Counsel, a nonprofit public interest law firm, appealed the decision, arguing that Thibes had no choice in her parents' decision to bring her to this country and that she feared her father's family in Brazil might retaliate against her for testifying against him if she is deported.

On Wednesday, immigration authorities notified Public Counsel that the appeal had been granted and Thibes would become a permanent resident. Her public interest attorney, Gina Amato Lough, said she was hopeful that the decision would remove a key obstacle to her entering a reentry program for mothers.

It is uncertain when Thibes will be sentenced. She works in the booking area of the women's jail in Lynwood, helping deputies admit inmates.

She said she regularly talks by phone to her children. Recently, she has been trying to soothe her 5-year-old son's anxiety about starting kindergarten. The children, she said, always ask when she is coming home. She has stopped telling them it will be soon.

Thibes said she wants her father to suffer behind bars rather than follow the example of Ariel Castro, who killed himself in prison last month after being convicted of repeatedly raping three women he'd imprisoned in his Cleveland house for more than a decade.

"I want him to die miserably in jail. I don't want him to die and end his life that quick," she said.

Spending time in L.A. County jail, Thibes said, has given her time to reflect on what has happened to her and made her realize that she needs therapy. She said many of the women in jail share tales of their own abuse with her. She hopes to obtain her high school diploma and one day write a book about her life. She still wants to become a therapist.

Foster agency thrived despite lapses

Financial woes, not abuse, are what finally cost the facility its L.A. County contract.

BY GARRETT THEROLF

Renee Moncito was a convicted thief and forger. She ran a foster care agency that was one of the most cited by state inspectors for lapses in care, including cases in which children were beaten, locked in their rooms for days or subjected to other mistreatment.

Yet year after year, the agency was re-approved by state and county officials, growing into one of the largest private foster family agencies in Los Angeles County, responsible for thousands of children over the years.

Wings of Refuge is now being terminated not because of abuse but after officials determined it had mismanaged millions in taxpayer dollars — a situation that has raised concerns about the county's ability to adequately monitor such groups.

The \$3-million-a-year contract with Wings of Refuge was canceled after the group failed to file its financial forms for charitable organizations for three years and lost its tax-exempt status, a requirement for foster care agencies in California.

For years, state regulators had flagged Wings of Refuge as being at financial risk. The agency had accumulated \$458,000 in delinquent payroll taxes and was more than \$2 million in debt,

[See Agency, A8]

Operating despite the infractions

[Agency, from A1]
according to licensing records.

County officials acknowledge they were slow to act.

"I think it's alarming that these kinds of situations exist and that we haven't done anything about it sooner," said Philip Browning, who was named director of Los Angeles County's Department of Children and Family Services in 2012 to help spur reforms.

Moncito, Wings of Refuge's chief executive, defended her record and blamed her agency's financial troubles on not receiving enough government money to care for children. "I have given way more than I have received," she said in a recent interview.

The county has begun to shift the nearly 200 foster children from Wings of Refuge to other agencies.

Wings' termination, effective Oct. 31, followed questions from The Times about Moncito's criminal history and the agency's record of physical and financial abuses.

In 1981, Moncito was convicted of grand theft and forgery related to passing bad checks.

Years of financial struggle followed her release, and personal bankruptcy records show that in 1998 she had \$55 in savings and was \$85,000 in debt. Moncito founded Wings of Refuge that year and was awarded tax-exempt status.

The state Department of Social Services licensed the agency to recruit and supervise foster parents, and it gave Moncito a waiver allowing her to work in foster care despite her felony convictions. "My crime wasn't something that would impact children in an adverse manner," Moncito said.

State social services director Will Lightbourne declined to be interviewed about Wings of Refuge. His spokesman said the records related to the criminal waiver were more than a decade old, and he was unable to explain the rationale behind the decision.

Los Angeles County officials said they were unaware of Moncito's criminal past until learning of it from The Times. Browning, however, said: "If that person would have applied for a county job, they never would have a job. And those rules should apply to these employees as well."

Wings of Refuge grew quickly, eventually caring for more than 1,100 children over a recent three-year period.

Moncito also launched other enterprises: a Wings of Refuge branch in Texas, a drug treatment program in Los Angeles and a used-clothing business that sold items to foster children.

State and county officials had problems with monitoring Wings' finances. Officials gave Moncito many extensions to file information. She missed deadlines, and the information she submitted often was incomplete or misleading, according to state regulators.

In August, Wings was cited by the state for making "false claims" to hide some of the agency's financial problems.

Tracie Hicks, who was a Wings of Refuge foster parent for nearly a decade, said Moncito exploited the system to make money off foster children.

"Wings of Refuge never should have existed in the first place," Hicks said. "They are poverty pimps — you know, people who sell out other people's misfortune to make money."



ROBERT GAUTHIER Los Angeles Times

RENEE MONCITO, chief executive of Wings of Refuge foster care agency, blamed her troubles on not receiving enough government money to care for children. "I have given way more than I have received," she said.

Among foster care providers in the county, Wings of Refuge has been one of the most cited by state child welfare inspectors for a variety of violations.

Moncito blamed the incidents on "professional foster children" who abused the complaint system to move from one foster home to another. She said her agency may have been too vigilant in reporting complaints to authorities.

"If you report all your incidents, you will have more incidents," she said. "My administrators over-reported."

Abuses substantiated by state investigators included those of a foster parent who twisted and pinched children's noses and another who repeatedly locked a small child in the garage or outside on cold nights. Some children were confined to their rooms for days at a time, leaving only to use the bathroom, according to state reports.

In one case, a state inspector found four foster children living in a home reeking of marijuana. The inspector said she left the home without completing the inspection or removing the children after "feeling seriously threatened" by an

obscenity-spewing foster parent.

State officials determined that foster mother Abena Williams had bruised the children in her care with belt lashes across their backs, legs, arms and buttocks for more than a year. After hearing witness testimony, an administrative judge concluded that Williams also had slapped their faces, dragged them up stairs and bit their fingers.

Williams was banned by the state from foster care for two years.

County officials said these and other incidents were not a factor in canceling the contract.

But Jennifer Rodriguez, a former foster youth who now leads the Youth Law Center in San Francisco, said the cases established a pattern of negligence that should have prompted the county to shut down Wings of Refuge.

"Why didn't the county ever consider all these cases to be a pattern of abuse?" Rodriguez said. "Clearly, this foster family agency was not finding appropriate parents and was not providing the monitoring that taxpayers paid it to do."

The financial problems at Wings of Refuge could

have been discovered earlier had there been stricter monitoring by the government. Officials acknowledge they do not have the staff to regularly scrutinize an industry of private foster family providers responsible for 15,000 children statewide and \$350 million in taxpayer funding annually.

In Los Angeles County, agencies usually receive government audits once a decade. They can take years to complete and carry little or no punishment. In other areas of the state, there have been no government audits for years.

"I'm not sure we know how much trouble is lurking out there," Browning said.

He said the state and county have little idea what the other is doing. The state is responsible for determining when an agency violates its licensing requirements, but county workers frequently do not have that information when they place children in homes.

In recent months, L.A. County has attempted to step up enforcement by increasing the frequency of financial reviews and doing more to identify patterns of abuse.

County supervisors this summer canceled the con-

tract of one agency, Teens Happy Homes, after The Times published articles about abuse and mismanagement.

Browning said more contractors will probably be cut in coming months. "I think we have made some progress, but I don't think we are there," he said.

Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas said in a prepared statement that he supports further reform. He and his four colleagues on the board all declined to be interviewed about their handling of the Wings of Refuge contract.

"It is always distressing to hear of children being hurt by the very people we as a county have trusted to rescue them from abusive home environments. There is no excuse for this," Ridley-Thomas said.

His campaign returned \$1,000 to Wings of Refuge after receiving questions about it from The Times. It is illegal for charities such as Wings to make political contributions.

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Times staff writers Doug Smith and Sandra Poindexter contributed to this report.

Medi-Cal for ex-inmates

Tues 10-8-13 LA Times
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ORE THAN 100,000 people are booked into Los Angeles County's jails each year. When they arrive, many of them are receiving health-care benefits through Medi-Cal, the state's healthcare program for the poor. But by the time they leave, those inmates often have no healthcare coverage.

That's bad, and not just for the inmates but for society as a whole. When people leave jail without medical coverage, their ailments often go untreated and they wind up in the emergency room with more expensive, acute problems. The ultimate cost usually ends up being covered by taxpayers in any case because hospitals can sign them up for Medi-Cal retroactively. What's more, former jail inmates who suffer from mental health issues and substance-abuse problems but who don't receive treatment are more likely to end up back in jail, according to studies of jail populations in Florida and Washington.

State lawmakers have moved to address the problem by passing AB 720. The bill would allow people who are enrolled in Medi-Cal when they are sent to jail to have their benefits suspended, rather than terminated, which is what happens under current law. The legislation would also permit counties to enroll those inmates who are not covered by Medi-Cal — but who are eligible for it — while they are in jail, to take effect when they are released.

The changes are sensible and will increase the continuity of care while reducing recidivism. Currently, many people fail to re-enroll in Medi-Cal when they are released from jail, often because they are too ill, mentally or physically, to navigate the process.

The bill could also help counties save money by providing local law enforcement agencies greater flexibility in managing their jail populations, especially those inmates who are mentally ill but not considered dangerous. In L.A. County, an estimated 15% of inmates suffer from some form of mental illness, and taxpayers spend about \$160 a day to house them — nearly twice the cost of housing other inmates. If more of those inmates were covered, the county might be able to release them and divert them to more effective and less costly programs.

What's more, enrolling inmates in Medi-Cal while they are detained would allow counties to shift some costs to the federal government. Starting in 2014, the federal government will pay for 100% of the medical costs of people who are newly eligible for Medi-Cal, including for pretrial inmates who are released on home detention and required to get treatment. That's a sensible approach that will help individuals who don't really belong in jail get the treatment they need to stay out of jail. No doubt, that's one reason the California State Sheriffs' Assn. supports the measure.

We urge Gov. Jerry Brown to sign AB 720.

10-9-13 L.A. Times

County approves funds for jail reforms

VED 10-9-13

The changes could cost \$89.8 million over three years.

BY ABBY SEWELL

A year after a citizens' commission handed down an extensive set of recommendations for preventing the abuse of jail inmates, Los Angeles County supervisors voted Tuesday to pay for many of the reforms.

The board unanimously voted to authorize \$29.3 million for the first year of a three-year plan that includes hiring more managers to oversee deputies, expanding training and installing more video cameras in the jails.

The changes are expected to cost \$89.8 million over three years.

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department has faced federal scrutiny and a barrage of lawsuits over allegations that there has been a pattern of inmate mistreatment by jailers and deputies.

The money approved Tuesday will go to hire 130 staff members, including more supervisors in the jails, lieutenants to oversee use-of-force investigations, internal affairs and training staff, and to install more cameras to capture the actions of inmates and guards.

Separately, the board is moving to hire an inspector general for the Sheriff's Department as recommended by the jail violence commission.

Supervisors Mark Ridley-Thomas and Gloria Molina have also proposed setting up a permanent citizens' oversight commission,

but the proposal has so far failed to get support from the rest of the board.

Steve Whitmore, spokesman for Sheriff Lee Baca, said of the measures approved Tuesday, "We're grateful, obviously. We applaud the board's commitment to implementing all the reforms, because the sheriff said from the very beginning, when [the recommendations] were first issued, that he couldn't write them better himself."

The jail reform measures were nearly derailed, however, when the supervisors reached an impasse over parts of the budget plan that would fund it.

The supervisors were slated to approve a \$362.4-million supplemental budget, which included money for the jail reforms, a contract for 500 jail beds at a facility in Kern County and additional social workers for the county's embattled child welfare department.

In an unusual move, Ridley-Thomas and Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich voted against approving the budget, which requires yes votes from four of the five supervisors.

Ridley-Thomas wanted to know how \$75 million in capital project and maintenance money would be divided among the five supervisors' districts.

"What is a fair formula for the distribution of those unallocated dollars?" he said in an interview after the vote. "We ought to have a fully clarified discussion of what the distribution of those resources are. We haven't had that discussion."

The failure of the budget vote led Molina to exclaim, "Just like the feds, we have

no budget?" and Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky called the move to block it "tea party-esque."

Delaying funding for the jail reforms "would not have been a very smart thing to do with the Justice Department breathing down our

necks," Yaroslavsky said.

The stalemate was short-lived, however.

At the end of the meeting, the supervisors came back for a second vote and unanimously passed the budget, with the caveat that the maintenance and capital

project money would go into an account that requires three votes rather than four to approve spending.

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Times staff writer Seema Mehta contributed to this report.